

### **REMARKS**

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being filed in response to the Office action dated February 5, 2004. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due reconsideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

#### **Status of the Claims**

Claims 9-11 were pending in this application. Claims 1-8 are being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 9-11 are being amended, as set forth above and in the attached marked-up presentation of the claim amendments, in order to more particularly define and distinctly claim Applicants' invention.

#### **Additional Amendments**

Claims 9-11 are being amended to correct formal errors and/or to better disclose or describe the features of the present invention as claimed. Applicants hereby submit that no new matter is being introduced into the application through the submission of this response.

#### **Formality Rejection**

Claim 11 was objected for informalities, and has requested correction thereof. As indicated, claim 11 is being amended as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, the withdrawal of the outstanding informality rejection is in order, and is therefore respectfully solicited.

#### **Allowed Subject Matters**

Claim 9 was allowed, and claim 11 would be allowed if it is rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As claim 11 is being amended to depend from claim 10 depends from the allowed claim 9, claim 11 is in condition for allowance.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1, 2 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Yoshida et al. (5,988,751).

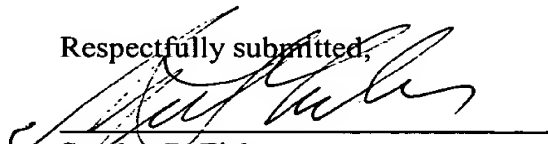
As claims 1 and 2 are being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claim 10 is being amended to depend from the allowed claim 9, the rejection thus becomes moot.

Conclusion

In view of all the above, clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention as now claimed and the prior art reference upon which the rejections in the Office Action rely, Applicants respectfully contend that the prior art references cannot anticipate the present invention or render the present invention obvious. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the address and phone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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